

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 04393 031302Z

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ACTION EUR-01

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TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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UNCLAS LISBON 4393

USINFO FOR IOP/M

EO 11652: N/A

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION PRESIDENT FORD TRIP

1. "EXPRESSO," PUBLISHED WEEKLY, IN AUGUST 2 ISSUE, TRACES HISTORY OF CSCE NEGOTIATIONS IN HALF-PAGE ARTICLE CITING THAT CONFERENCE WAS SOVIET INSPIRATION OF TWENTY YEARS AGO. ARTICLE STATES THAT IN LAST TEN YEARS SOVIET MILITARY EXPENSES INCREASED BY 110 PERCENT WHILE U.S. INCREASE WAS ONLY 60 PERCENT. EXPRESSO, BY USING COMPLICATED MATH, DEDUCES THAT IN SPITE OF PERCENTAGES RESULT IS THAT U.S. INCREASE WAS "HIGHLY SUPERIOR." ARTICLE GOES ON TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT IN LAST FOUR YEARS U.S. DEFENSE EXPENDITURES DIMINISHED, IN REAL TERMS, BY FOUR PERCENT YEARLY WHEREAS THOSE OF SOVIET UNION INCREASED BY FIFTEEN TO TWENTY PERCENT YEARLY.

2. WEEKLY "SEMPRE FIXE" CARRIES LARGE PHOTOS OF PRESIDENT FORD AND SECGEN BRESHNEV ON BACK PAGE WITH ACCOMPANYING ARTICLE CLAIMING CONFERENCE AS FULFILMENT OF SOVIET DREAM. ITEM SAYS FORD AND KISSINGER "HAD TO DEAL WITH AN INTERNAL STRUGGLE TO CONVINCE AMERICANS THAT THERE WAS NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE TO DETENTE THAN HELSINKI SUMMIT." ARTICLE QUOTES FORD AS SAYING HE WILL MAINTAIN STRONG MILITARY CONTINGENTS IN GERMANY BECAUSE "MILITARY DEFENSE IS THE BEST GUARANTEE FOR PEACE." SEMPRE FIXE SAYS FORD MADE THIS PRONOUNCEMENT AT A LUNCH FOR FOUR THOUSAND AMERICAN AND GERMAN SOLDIERS AT KIRSCHGOENS. ARTICLE GOES ON TO QUOTE FORD AS SAYING THE "FIFTH DIVISION STATIONED IN GERMANY WILL BE EQUIPPED WITH THE MOST MODERN ARMAMENTS."

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Authority: n/a
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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